

1805

My Contribution to The

1955

# Sesquicentennial Celebration

AUGUST 18 — 28

1955



Under the auspices of the Clatsop County Historical Museum and under the very valuable patronage of Louis Sovey, Patricia Flavel and the other members of the Flavel family, Rolf Klepp, Arthur Dempsey and officals of the Pacific Power & Light Company. Under the offical leadership of past presidents Lawrence Rogers, Walter Johnson, Dr. R. W. Kullberg, Charles Dodge and the present able leadership of Otto Owen, president; Charles Dodge, vice-president; Walter Hay, second vice-presidtnt; John Wicks, treasurer; Philippa Seabrook, recording secretary; Burnby Bell, secretary; Harry Davidson, curator.



NARRATED BY AUGUST HILDEBRAND

Historian

82.3.68

## CHINOOK INDIAN CHIEF CONCOMLY AND PHRENOLOGY

We are occupied at the present with the study and dedication of old Chinook Indian Chief CONCOMLY'S FLATTENED SKULL.

This skull was returned from England through the initiative of Mrs. Catherine Christians Hildebrand (born in Astoria 1871) and Burnby Bell, a descendant of an early Scotch, Hudson Bay pioneer family, son of Mrs. Polly McKean Bell, the local historian.

This skull now finds a respected and revered resting place in the land of his birth; — in the Historical Museum in the CITY OF ASTORIA.

Studying the skull — and because of personal past experience — I procured from our local library a book entitled "40 Years in Phrenology by Nelson Sizer", written about 1882. It interested me very much to learn from the book, that the shape and quality of the brain had an influence on the lives of the possessor. The art of phrenological forecasting is not practiced any more, it BEING OUT OF FASHION!

The idea, connecting this Chinook Indian Chief's skull with phrenological forebodings and forecastings, occurred to me when I noticed the high forehead of this benevolent and wise Indian, who dealt wisely and peaceably with the intruding whiteman.

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When I was young, before I was married, about 62 years ago, phrenology was yet in vogue. Like many others I had my head examined. The verdict was: "YOU ARE VERY

PERSISTING IN YOUR EFFORTS. YOU CAN HAVE MANY IRONS IN THE FIRE AND TEND TO THEM ALL. WHAT YOU START YOU WILL FINISH. YOU WILL NOT MAKE A GOOD ORATOR, BUT WILL BE A GOOD WRITER. YOUR BODY CRAVES EXERCISE. YOU WILL DO WELL HANDLING HEAVY GOODS, IRON AND WOOD PRODUCTS. YOU WILL LIKE GOOD LOOKING WOMEN." I then showed the phrenologist a photo of my intended. He said: "SHE HAS A FINE HEAD. OH WELL, YOU MAY HAVE A SQUABBLE ONCE IN A WHILE — BUT BOTH WILL GET OVER IT."

At that time I did not think seriously of this matter; it seemingly was then a fashionable fad and passed it off as an incident.

Looking back now and recalling, I drifted in to be a mountain climber (I belong as yet to the association, although past the physical ability — 86 years of age). I attend as yet the PICNICS and meetings, although suffering from arthritis.

Through past associations with many mountaineering clubs, I got the idea of writing my experiences of such trips and learned through intercourse with other hiking clubs many facts, especially of local Indian life and history. I also was among the Frazer River Fort Langly Indians and picked up short phrases of their language. This all broadened my mind.

In light of my own experiences, my own phrenological forecast, the examination of Chinook Indian Chief Concomly's skull and the known history of his doings and dealing

with the intruding whiteman — I can not conceive the idea that phrenology is a lost art — especially when I find myself dealing in iron and wood products in the shape of stoves and furniture — and even in rocks. Yes, I am leaving many irons in the fire for my heirs. And, by the way, we, Mrs. Hildebrand and I celebrated our 62nd wedding day last July 9th, 1955.

During my early days in Astoria, about 1885, I met a perfect specimen of a living, physically flattened head, in the form of what may be termed a well groomed, beautiful, noble young Indian woman; also another one, only with a partially flat head. At that time I paid no particular attention to them, passing it as an every day occurrence to meet such people.

This was also at the time when the fashionable Chinese Ladies — wives of the Chinese Labor Barons, who contracted Chinese Coolies to the White Salmon Cannery owners — wore fashionable miniature shoes, much too small for their feet, in which they hobbled, swayingly on the streets of Astoria, thus obeying the severe dictates of Chinese Fashion.

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Subsequently it came to be known that the Diesel Engine — that was supposed to be invented by a German named Diesel — that he, Diesel got his idea (while traveling on a Dutch vessel) from SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS, who used close fitting bamboo pipes, one inside the other, hitting hard the inner one — creating fire through AIR PRESSURE. Then again, the larger floating power driven ships are formed now, at the water-



line, according to North American Indian ideas — creating a gliding, non disturbing commotion in the water — a natural result.

It occurred to me that it may be possible to connect Chinook Indian Chief Concomly's skull with the art of phrenology:— improving ones brain by physical application to a higher plane. It is known that the higher located portions of the brain produce loftier, religious thoughts. The question arises — did the American West Coast Indians believe in phrenology and practiced physical means to improve their thinking apparatus. — And, that the supposed German inventors GALL and SPURZHEIM got their idea, the same as DIESEL, from the American Northwest Coast Indians? I let you ponder over this question — — —.

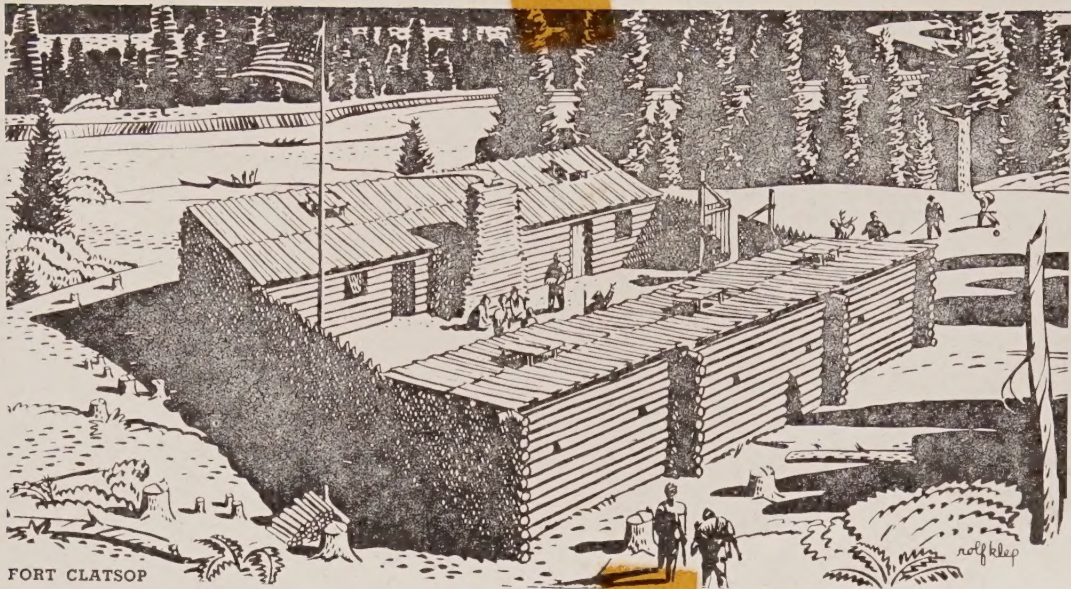
We also know that the Chinook Empire extended from the Straits of Fuca, in the North to the Siskiyou mountains to the South — and East to above The Dalles. And, that according to oriental scholars the word CHINOOK translates:— people living in WOODEN SHELTERS, in contrast to people living in ICE IGLOOS to the North, in SKIN TEPEES to the East and HOGANS to the South.

The Chinook Empire was divided into many small kingdoms or tribes, each with a chief — too numerous to mention all. Also what is known as the MOUNDS of Tenino near Bucoda, Washington, are ancient Indian fortifications, protecting the Chinook Federation against subsequent Asiatic hordes, coming by the way of the Aleutian Islands and Straits of Georgia — coveting the land of plenty, the land of fish, fowl, fauna, furs and flora.

This was at a time when the bow and arrow were the main war weapons, and at the time the great Chinese Wall was built. This wall was not built to keep the Northern hordes out, but to keep the Southern labor throng from leaving the building of the wall gave them employment. This according to a certain Major Morgan, a white Manxman, born and raised in China. Also traditon of the Chippewa Indians corroborates a battle at the Tenino Mounds — according to a white-man, A. B. Wattson, deceased, who lived at Gearhart years ago. He was adopted as a child in the Chippewa tribe. These Chippewa Indians, coming from Asia, were repulsed at Tenino, traveled then via Frazer and Skeena river gorges to the Great Lakes. This was also corroborated from the verbal history of the local Chinook Indians by a certain Mr. U. Robins, a fellow hiker and son of an early Indian Christian missionary to whom the Indians confided this. This U. Robins may be living yet.

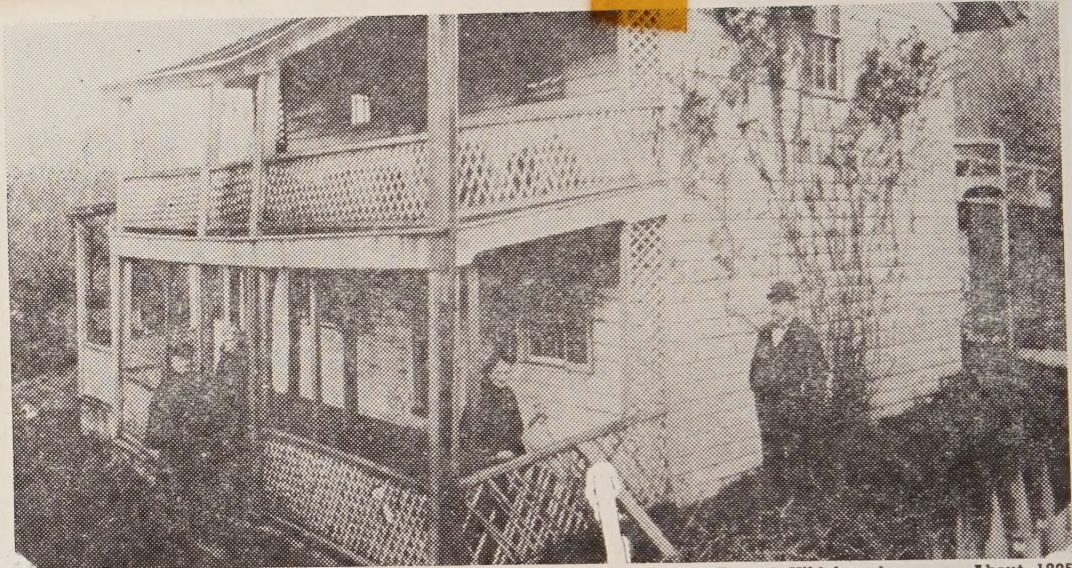
So let us thoughtfully and reverently dedicate this skull to the memory of the wise CHINOOK INDIAN RULER CONCOMLY— and say of him in the language of his realm— NICA HI—U—CLOSE TUM TUM TILLI-CUM — which translates: You were a very good hearted fellow.

AUGUST HILDEBRAND  
Astoria, Oregon  
August 1955



FORT CLATSOP





Mrs. Bridget Grant and Mrs. Munson

Miss Elliott

August Hildebrand

— About 1895